

E1

*but 31* administering basic fibroblast growth factor to said animal, wherein said animal has endotoxic shock.

Please amend claim 4 as follows:

B2

*but 31* 4. (four times amended) A method of inhibiting endothelial apoptosis resulting from endotoxic shock in an animal comprising inhibiting the generation of ceramide from sphingomyelin, comprising the step of:

administering basic fibroblast growth factor to said animal, wherein said animal has endotoxic shock.

Please amend claim 10 as follows:

B3

*but 31* 10. (thrice amended) A method of treating an individual at risk for sepsis, comprising inhibiting endothelial apoptosis resulting from sepsis by inhibiting the generation of ceramide from sphingomyelin, comprising the step of:

administering basic fibroblast growth factor to said individual, wherein said fibroblast growth factor prevents endothelial apoptosis resulting from sepsis.